

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OHFA RECOGNIZES TWO ORGANIZATIONS WITH THE SPIRIT OF HOMEOWNERSHIP EXCELLENCE AWARDS; AWARDS MORE THAN \$2.7 MILLION FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMUNITIES ACROSS OHIO

COLUMBUS – The Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) Board celebrated National Homeownership Month with a proclamation from Governor John R. Kasich and presented two organizations with the 2013 Spirit of Homeownership Excellence Awards (SHEA). The OHFA Board meeting was held off-site at the Schoenbaum Family Center in the Weinland Park neighborhood of Columbus.

The SHEAs were created by OHFA to showcase innovation and quality initiatives that promote homeownership opportunities and accessibility in the state. Winners are selected based on a number of factors including innovation, length of program, geographical reach, coordination with local, state and/or national partners, and the ability to be replicated. Honored with the 2013 SHEAs were the Community Action Commission (CAC) of Fayette County and Homes on the Hill Community Development Corporation (CDC).

The CAC of Fayette County was recognized for its Self Help Housing program in the Arbor Village neighborhood of Washington Court House. The program is designed to help very low- and low-income residents of Washington Court House to own an affordable, energy efficient home. Homeowners receive education on credit repair, credit score maintenance and the responsibilities of homeownership and home maintenance. The CAC of Fayette County has built 102 homes through the program. Accepting on behalf of the CAC of Fayette County was Stephen Creed, Housing Director of the organization.

The Columbus-based Homes on the Hill CDC was recognized for its Housing Counseling and Homeownership program. The program provides pre-purchase housing counseling, post purchase maintenance and home improvement counseling, foreclosure prevention and affordable housing development. To date, the Agency has counseled more than 5,000 Central Ohioans and provided more than \$300,000 in down payment assistance to more than 130 families purchasing a home since 1998. Accepting on behalf of Homes on the Hill CDC was Stephen Torsell, Executive Director, Daniel Ruggiero, Program Director, and Mark Easterling, Foreclosure Specialist, for the Homes on the Hill CDC.

The Board also approved more than \$2.7 million in funding through the Housing Development Assistance Program (HDAP) to provide flexible, low-interest financing for affordable housing developments. Funding for HDAP comes from the federal HOME program and the Ohio Housing Trust Fund (OHTF).

The recipients of the HDAP funding include:

- **Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) – \$320,943 in HDAP**
This is the second round of funding provided for the Adult Care Facilities (ACF) Critical Repairs

Program. In FY12, ODMH assumed licensure authority over approximately 700 ACFs, which provide housing for individuals who need a higher level of housing care. The facilities require repairs needed to maintain their structural integrity and habitability. The latest funding will provide repairs for an estimated 30-40 ACFs throughout the state.

- **Vance Street Apartments in Bluffton, Allen County – \$790,000 in HDAP**

Vance Street Apartments involves the acquisition and rehabilitation of a three-story building with 40 units of housing for seniors in Bluffton, Allen County. The rehabilitation involves the replacement of siding, windows, air conditioners, appliances, flooring and kitchen and bathroom updates in all units. The community is within close distance to many local businesses.

- **Westerly III in Lakewood, Cuyahoga County – \$1,000,000 in HDAP**

Westerly III involves the acquisition and rehabilitation of one 15-story building with 179 units of housing for seniors in Lakewood, Cuyahoga County. The scope of work includes site and exterior building improvement and complete unit updates.

- **Beasley Place in Cincinnati, Hamilton County – \$600,000 in HDAP**

Beasley Place involves the rehabilitation of a five-story building in the historic Over the Rhine neighborhood of Cincinnati, Hamilton County. When completed, each unit will feature new appliances, ceiling fans, air conditioning and a security system. Work will include the addition of an elevator, community room, laundry facility and an additional resident storage area.

The Board also approved the 2013 HDAP Bond Gap Financing (BGF) Guidelines. The purpose of the program is to provide financing for eligible affordable housing projects to increase, preserve and/or improve the supply of decent, safe, affordable housing for low- and moderate-income persons. OHFA expects to fund approximately 300 units through the 2013 BGF program with approximately \$6 million available through the Ohio Housing Trust Fund. To view the guidelines, visit www.ohiohome.org.

In other news, the Board approved the Agency's 2014 Annual Plan and Housing Needs Assessment. For further information regarding the properties awarded funding, please contact OHFA at 888-362-6432.

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About the Ohio Housing Finance Agency

OHFA is a self-supporting quasi-public agency governed by an eleven member board. The Agency uses federal and state resources to provide housing opportunities for families and individuals through programs designed to develop, preserve and sustain affordable housing throughout the state of Ohio. OHFA is also the administrator of the state's foreclosure prevention program, Save the Dream Ohio.